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Project Administrator

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access ...**BEHIND** **THE SCENES**

Executive Report

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Last week I had the opportunity to spend some time on the East Coast. During the first part of the week, I attended the APTA Bus & Paratransit Conference in Cleveland. In addition to many informative sessions on topics such as coordination, travel training, mobility management, and legislative updates, Mark Nimmo from SullivanCurtisMonroe and I gave a presentation on Access Services' automobile liability program. Many of the attendees were interested in receiving more information on the program. Another topic



The Federal Courthouse in Cleveland

that really interested the audience was our fantastic safety program and the amazing results that we have achieved in a relatively short period of time.

The second part of my week on the East Coast was spent in Washington, D.C. with André Colaiace. We had a number of meetings, including one with staff from the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. During that meeting, one of

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Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Cleveland

Miles of Smiles Program Update

As project manager of the Customer Perception Project, I wanted to provide another progress update.

On May 6th, Access Services staff including myself, Luis Garcia, Jeannette Cano and Hamilton Franco visited MV Transportation's facility in the San Fernando Valley to kick

off the employee recognition portion of the *Miles of Smiles* campaign. This was the ideal day to visit because MV was having their Spring barbeque/employee appreciation day. With a list in hand of 24 drivers

who received *Miles of Smiles* commendations.

Each driver received a Certificate of Appreciation, a letter of acknowledgement and a Smile Ambassador pin (like the one above). I had the pleasure and



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...Behind the Scenes

Global Paratransit Community Outreach

Southern Region's Global Paratransit along with Access Services visited Vista ADHC in Maywood, CA. We were welcomed with open arms by some eighty two (82) Spanish speaking members from Vista ADHC. There was great dialogue between the groups.

Informative Spanish version leaflets, flyers and Rider's Guides were distributed amongst the attendees. Members left with more information regarding the services Access provides. Thank you to the Vista staff!



Geoffrey Okamoto
Project Administrator



Cal ACT Conference

I had an opportunity to attend the California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT) Spring Conference and Expo on April 20-22. CalACT is a statewide, non-profit organization that represents small, rural, and specialized transportation providers.

interest because Access is the CTSA for L.A. County and operates a mobility management and travel training program.

The conference featured a number of sessions on mobility management and the role of CTSA's in the state. These sessions were of particular

Other sessions included a discussion on the state of transit funding on the State and federal level, ADA eligibility and emergency & security planning. Overall, it was a great conference and I was glad to have attended.

Matthew Avancena
Mgr. of Planning & Coordination

Miles of Smiles (cont.)

privilege of meeting five of the drivers during the barbeque and hand delivering the goods! It was encouraging that each driver was already familiar with the *Miles of Smiles* program and they really appreciated the gesture! Here are the five recipients that I had the pleasure to meet!

As I mentioned in my last update, April saw a huge increase of Miles of Smiles commendations and nearly 100 were for call center operators!

David Foster
Project Administrator



In the upcoming weeks the regional teams and I will be visiting the other service providers to present their drivers with our tokens of appreciation as well!



A saying created in the Access Services call center is that “any other Customer Service arena is a walk in the park” compared to Access. And I truly believe this! Because of the constantly changing needs of the community we serve, Access CSRs see training as an ongoing part of their daily routine. We have our good days where commendations received can be high, and we have days where unhappy customers want our undivided attention for long periods of time (assisting and educating the customer is a formidable and time-consuming task if it is to be done right — and here at Access Services, we do it right!)

As everyone knows, there are multitudes of people assisting Access in reaching its daily goals, which is to produce projects that meet our Mission and Vision Statements. We don’t always have control over what may occur operationally, but we never allow this to interfere with how we

handle an unhappy customer. We have three parts to our Support Team: Customer Support Representatives, Customer Care Representatives, and the Operations Monitoring Center; one of which we’ll discuss today. The other two will follow in another issue.

The experience brought to the table by our CSRs, coupled with our ongoing training, has equipped them well to handle all types of calls and real time issues. They stress their ability to show concern, empathy and the willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty whenever possible. Knowing that initial hold and actual talk times play a major part in what we do, each CSR should be applauded for their constant efforts in giving their personal best each day. When you’ve encountered irritation and a frown over the phone, and you later turn that into a smile, you’ve done a terrific job.

Stay tuned for Part II–The OMC & Customer Care.

Sean Frye
Dir. of Customer Support Services

March & April Superior Service Award Winners

On April 26th Access Services presented the Superior Service Award Recipient for March 2010 to the ASI Board. Mr. Manuel Ramos was honored and received his award. He was presented by Access Services Project Administrator of the Southern Region, Geoffrey Okamoto. “I just want to thank everyone for making this possible,” said Manuel Ramos.

Access Services would like to again thank Manuel for his dedication!

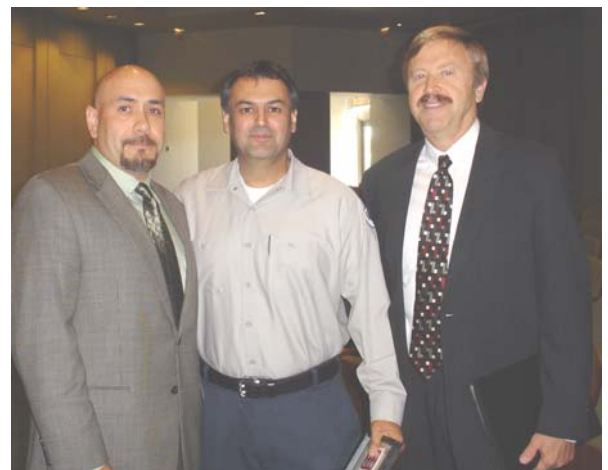
Geoffrey Okamoto
Project Administrator



Geoffrey Okamoto, Manuel Ramos-GPI, Shelly Verrinder, Lee Habibi-GPI

MV Transportation vehicle operator Hamid Zamani was the recipient of the April 2010 Access Services Superior Service Award. The award was presented during the April Access Services Board of Directors meeting. Hamid is a native of Afghanistan and immigrated to the United States in the late 1970’s. A graduate of Canoga Park High he attended Pierce College prior to his career in transportation. Hamid enjoys working in the paratransit industry and credits his work experiences to shaping his outlook on life. Congratulations to Hamid!!!

Luis Garcia
Project Administrator



Luis Garcia, Hamid Zamani & Dennis Burgess, MV Transport.

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~ Mission Statement ~

Access Services promotes access to all modes of transportation and provides quality and safe ADA paratransit service on behalf of public transit agencies in Los Angeles County.

~ Vision Statement ~

Access Services serves the community as the leader in promoting accessible and innovative transportation solutions.

We accomplish this vision by:

- *Providing quality, efficient, safe and dependable ADA paratransit service.*
- *Leading the national dialogue as an advocate for universal access to transportation.*
- *Partnering with other entities to secure alternate funding sources and legislation that expands transportation options.*

Executive Report (cont.)

the staff members asked us about a Chrysler request to the FTA for a Buy American waiver for its minivans. We discussed how there currently are no domestically-produced minivans and this is delaying paratransit vehicle procurements throughout the country. (Any agency that goes out to bid must get a separate waiver from the FTA in order to buy a non-domestic minivan.) After the meeting, we were contacted by Chrysler's legislative relations team and we have agreed to support their effort to get a blanket waiver that would allow any agency to buy their minivans without having to get a separate waiver from the FTA. I thought this was an interesting example of how government regulations, as well intentioned as they may be, can often have unforeseen consequences for public agencies like Access Services.

Shelly Verrinder
Executive Director

Legislative Meetings

Shelly Verrinder and I just got back from our annual lobbying trip to Washington, D.C. Along with our federal advocate, Len Simon, we met with a number of Congressional offices and staffers from the House and Senate to discuss appropriations and paratransit policy issues. We also had the honor of having another meeting with FTA Deputy Administrator Therese McMillian and stopped by Easter Seals Project Action to touch base with them about various policy issues. A more detailed discussion of our meetings can be found in the May Board Box.



André Colaiace
Dep. Exec. Dir., Governmental Affairs

Rider comments

"Access works for me all of the time. As a rider of Access year after year you have affected my life in many positive ways. I want the drivers, routers, dispatchers and each person who contributes to providing my services to know they are making a difference in my life and that's very important to me as well as my family."

– Joshua, Santa Monica

– Rider since 2000